

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 6, 2005 (BOS Mtg. 1/18/05)

TO: York County Board of Supervisors

FROM: James O. McReynolds, County Administrator

SUBJECT: Application No. UP-652-05, Tidewater Development Company, LLC, Williamsburg Marketcenter

ISSUE

This application requests a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Section 24.1-466(h) of the York County Zoning Ordinance, to authorize a retail center of more than 80,000 gross square feet on an approximately 36-acre portion of two parcels with a combined area of 177.4 acres. The site is located at 6500 and 6690 Mooretown Road (Route 603) and further identified as Assessor's Parcel Nos. 2-19-B3 and 2-34 (portion). The application also includes a minor amendment to Special Use Permit UP-624-03, granted to Home Depot for a home improvement center, to authorize expansion of an existing joint access area between the two developments. The property is located on the east side of Mooretown Road, approximately 1500 feet south of its intersection with East Rochambeau Drive (Route F137).

DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Bulifants, L.P.
- Location: 6500 (portion) and 6690 Mooretown Road (Route 603)
- Area: Approximately 36 acres, plus a 0.8 acre proposed joint access easement
- Frontage: Approximately 1400 feet on Mooretown Road
- Utilities: The property is currently served by public water and sewer
- Topography: Varied
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: Economic Opportunity
- Zoning Classification: EO – Economic Opportunity
WMP – Watershed Management and Protection overlay
EMA – Environmental Management Area overlay

- Existing Development: Vacant

- Surrounding Development:

North: Home Depot home improvement center

East: Vacant

South: Regional storm water management pond, Michael Commons
office/commercial center beyond

West: Williamsburg Community Hospital (under construction) across Mooretown
Road

- Proposed Development: 184,518 square-foot retail center with four adjacent
outparcels

CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

1. The applicant proposes to subdivide a parcel of approximately 36 acres (including four outparcels) from the combined 177.4-acre subject parcels to construct the proposed retail center. The total area subject to the Special Use Permit (SUP) includes an additional 0.8-acre containing a joint access area to be shared with the adjacent Home Depot center. Four proposed outparcels are shown fronting on Mooretown Road. A fifth outparcel, labeled “potential future outparcel” on the applicant’s sketch plan and abutting the northwest side of Michael Commons, is not a part of this application.
2. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area for Economic Opportunity, and the property is zoned EO (Economic Opportunity). This designation is intended to promote a mix of commercial, tourist-related and limited industrial uses, and emphasis is placed on capital- and labor-intensive uses. Current uses in the area of the subject site include Williamsburg Community Hospital, Lowe’s, Wal-Mart, Michael Commons, a Sonic drive-through restaurant and Home Depot. Surrounding zoning includes EO to the north, south and west and RR (Rural Residential) to the east. The property is subject to the WMP (Watershed Management and Protection Area) and the EMA (Environmental Management Area) overlay districts. The property’s eastern boundary borders Queen Creek, which is a tributary stream draining directly into Waller Mill Reservoir.
3. Quality architectural and landscape design is emphasized in the Comprehensive Plan Sub-area Description for this area of the County as well as in the Economic Opportunity Land Use Designation section. Architectural renderings of the building illustrate façade materials of pre-cast brick panels and beige EIFS with white trim. In my opinion, the architectural elevations submitted by the applicant fulfill the design goals contained in the referenced sections of the Comprehensive Plan and will result in an aesthetically pleasing, high-quality project. Economic

Opportunity district regulations require monument style freestanding signage, and the applicant proposes a monument sign at the main entrance to the development.

In accordance with Section 24.1-245 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Mooretown Road frontage of the subject site is subject to greenbelt regulations, which require a 45-foot wide landscaped open space area along Mooretown Road. The applicant's sketch plan indicates this area as a landscape preservation easement.

Under Section 24.1-244(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, a 10-foot landscaped open space strip is required around the perimeter of all buildings. In accordance with Section 24.1-245(a), building perimeter landscaping is not required for the rear of buildings located on parcels subject to greenbelt regulations. Therefore, building perimeter plantings would be required only for the front and sides of the proposed buildings. Although the applicant's sketch plan does not indicate these plantings because of the scale of the drawings, it will be required pursuant to site plan review and approval.

In order to provide a buffer between the main retail center parking lot and the outparcels, I am recommending that evergreen and deciduous trees with evergreen shrubs be installed along the northeastern side of the proposed outparcels. A proposed approval condition addresses this issue.

4. Water quality and storm water runoff are of substantial concern in this area. Under the Watershed Management Protection (WMP) overlay district provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, the northern and eastern end of the property is subject to 200-foot stream buffers associated with Queen Creek (stream contributing to the Waller Mill Reservoir) and an unnamed perennial stream. Under the Environmental Management Area (EMA) overlay district standards of the Zoning Ordinance (Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requirements), all perennial streams are subject to a 100-foot stream buffer, which would include Queen Creek and any of its perennial tributaries. Consistent with the conditions of approval for the Home Depot site, I recommend there be no reduction of the 200-foot WMP buffer adjacent to Queen Creek, and an approval condition addresses this issue.

County GIS maps indicate a stream along the site's proposed eastern property line, running between Queen Creek and the existing storm water management pond located adjacent to the Michael Commons development. Development in the area of this stream will be subject to applicable WMP and EMA buffer regulations. Consistent with stormwater management studies performed for the property to the south and east of this pond (i.e., Michael Commons / International Center) and the unnamed tributary, I believe the applicant should be eligible to apply for reduction of the 200-foot buffer as long as all provisions of the WMP District are observed and all runoff from the entire site is directed through the existing stormwater management pond (which has been designed to accommodate runoff from the subject site) or another stormwater management facility.

5. The Environmental and Development Services Utilities Division has indicated that the development as proposed would require a new gravity sewer and pump station for sanitary sewer service. A proposed approval condition addresses this requirement.
6. According to the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) *Trip Generation* manual (7th edition), the proposed retail center can be expected to generate approximately 15,700 vehicle trips per day on Mooretown Road, including 339 in the AM peak hour and 1,467 in the PM peak hour. Mooretown Road is a major collector road that is becoming a minor arterial as new development occurs and traffic volumes increase. Pursuant to Section 24.1-252 of the Zoning Ordinance, no more than one entrance would typically be permitted for a development on Mooretown Road; however, the subject property has sufficient road frontage to warrant a second entrance. The applicant has requested a *third* entrance, which would be limited to right turns in and out, in addition to the two signalized entrances that would be aligned with the Williamsburg Community Hospital entrances on the opposite side of Mooretown Road. (Traffic signals will be warranted at both hospital entrances, with or without the proposed retail center.)

The Zoning Ordinance specifies that the *third* entrance can only be permitted if the need for and safety of such is substantiated by a traffic impact analysis that includes full analyses of the transportation system with and without the requested entrance. In addition, the traffic study must also demonstrate by the use of recognized progression and queuing analyses or simulations that the additional entrance, if permitted, will not degrade the traffic flow characteristics or the traffic carrying capacity of the street. The applicant has submitted a traffic impact analysis, which merely asserts that traffic volumes at the joint entrance with Home Depot are relatively small and that “there should be no conflicts” with the third entrance. In staff’s opinion, this fails to meet the standard for demonstrating that the third entrance is in fact needed and would not adversely affect traffic flow on Mooretown Road.

I believe it is important to limit the number of access points on Mooretown Road in order to preserve its carrying capacity. Besides creating additional conflict points, unsignalized driveways along arterial roads impede traffic flow and, in so doing, reduce road capacity.¹ This is why the County ordinances have required developers (International Center, Home Depot out-parcels, Wachovia Bank) to record restricted access easements along Mooretown Road as a condition of development plan approval. Currently this segment of Mooretown Road carries only an estimated 5,000 vehicles per day and operates at an acceptable Level of Service, but as development occurs – including the new Williamsburg Community Hospital, which at full build-out (586,000 square feet of hospital space and 400,000 square feet of medical office space) is estimated to generate

¹ It is estimated that the capacity of a four-lane arterial street with a 45 mph speed limit will be reduced by over 1% for every 2% of the traffic that turns between the right lane and driveways at unsignalized driveway locations.

approximately 24,000 vehicle trips per day by itself – the Level of Service is likely to deteriorate. Growing budget shortfalls at the state level make it increasingly unlikely that funding will be available in the future for improvements to Mooretown Road in the event that they become necessary. It is important; therefore, that the County take whatever steps it can through the development approval process to utilize good design techniques, such as access management, that will help prevent traffic problems from occurring. Limiting access to this proposed center to two signalized entrances would be in keeping with the design of similar large retail centers in the immediate region. For example, the Monticello Marketplace center, which has a similar building and parking layout, was developed without supplemental right-in right-out entrances. Therefore, I recommend that the third entrance be allowed only if the applicant can demonstrate compliance with the performance standard set forth in the Zoning Ordinance to the satisfaction of VDOT. A proposed approval condition addresses this issue.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMENDATION

The Planning Commission is scheduled to hear this application at its January 12, 2005 meeting. The Board will be notified of the Commission's recommendation immediately following the meeting.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDATION

The Route 199 and Mooretown Road corridors have been planned for a mix of retail, office, light industrial, and tourist-oriented development. The proposed retail center is compatible with existing large-scale retail and restaurant uses and the hospital located in the immediate vicinity. Proposed approval conditions address concerns related to watershed protection, traffic and site access and landscaping. Therefore, based on the considerations and conclusions as noted, and assuming action by the Planning Commission, I recommend that the Board approve this application subject to the conditions contained in proposed Resolution No. R05-8.

Carter/3337:AMP

Attachments:

- Zoning Map
- Conceptual Plan
- Building Elevation
- Proposed Resolution No. R05-8